

REPLY
TO A
PAMPHLET

INTITLED,
POPULAR PREJUDICES
AGAINST THE
CONVENTION and TREATY
WITH

S P A I N,

Examin'd and Answered.

IN A
LETTER
TO A
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

THE SECOND EDITION.



L O N D O N :

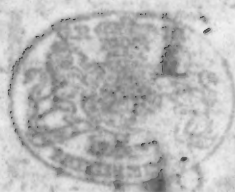
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SPECIAL

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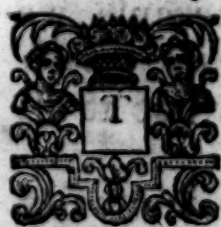
To a PAMPHLET, intitl'd,

POPULAR PREJUDICES

AGAINST THE

CONVENTION, &c.

S I R,



THE Affair of the *Spanish* Depredations having been amply laid open before both Houses of *Parliament* the last Sessions, when the Merchants fully proved their Allegations, as to the Damages sustained, and Cruelties undergone. In consequence of which, both Houses came to these vigorous Resolutions, *That it was our undoubted Right to Sail to and from any of his MAJESTY'S Dominions in America, and that our Ships had*

been detained, and several Captures made, upon Pretences altogether groundless and unwarrantable, &c.

BOTH HOUSES also addressed his MAJESTY to use his strongest Instances with the King of *Spain*, to make immediate Satisfaction to his much injured Merchants, and likewise to obtain good Security for a free Trade for the future; and that if his Royal and Friendly Instances could not be able to procure the same from his *Catholick* Majesty, they would enable his MAJESTY to take such Measures as should become necessary, to maintain the Honour and Dignity of his Crown, and the Rights of his People.

After these solemn Addresses, the *Ministry* thought it absolutely necessary to strengthen his MAJESTY by an additional Number of Seamen; accordingly Ten thousand more were *unanimously* agreed to. The Eyes of all *Europe* were then fixed upon us, and every one thought a War inevitable: And the more Reason they had to think so, because we had Couriers frequently from *Spain*, with Answers from his *Catholick* Majesty not at all pleasing to us.

Mean time the honest *Tars* voluntarily entered the Service in great Numbers, and in full Hopes of Action. When, all on a sudden, we were agreeably surprized with the pleasing Prospect of a Peace, instead of a calamitous and destructive War, which never fails to spread Desolation where-ever it comes.

An

An honourable Peace is certainly more to be coveted than a War; and by the sudden Discharge of our supernumerary Sailors, the People of *England* were in great hopes such had been obtain'd; for it was said, no Man in his Wits would part with his Power till his Ends had been compleated. Altho' some dissatisfied People expressed their Admiration at the quick and unusual Dispatch of Don *Benjamin Keene*, who, with the Assistance of *Commissaries*, had been never so alert before; and were at a Loss to know, whether it was owing to the *Velocity* of our Ministers, or the Sight of our Squadrons, which might strike a *Panick* in the *Spanish* Court.

Be that as it will, a *Convention* was agreed upon, signed, sealed, and ratified; which is not at all agreeable to the *Merchants*, because our Rights are no where expressed therein, but remain in a very doubtful, and, indeed, melancholly Situation. But, says this Author, the *Convention* is only preliminary to a *Treaty*, only a *Settling of the Grounds upon which to treat*. This I acknowledge; but it follows not from thence, that we shall suffer those Rights we have hitherto enjoyed for several Ages, to be now called in question; by admitting such a Thing, we acknowledge them as Doubts, and Points unsettled, which we can't in Justice do, since they have been settled many Years ago, when the Glory of this Nation was at its greatest Height. Shall we,

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we, therefore, now suffer them to be resettled to our own Disadvantage? And such we have great Reason to suspect, should they be left to *Plenipotentiaries*, alias *Commissaries*.

We have not much Reason to boast of the Generosity of the Court of *Spain*; if we admit any Doubts in our Navigation and Commerce, it will be a hard matter for us to get them clear'd up to our Advantage. They will be far from making any such Concessions; at least we ought not to put it in their Power to dispute them.

War is never to be tried till Treaties prove ineffectual. Is not a Treaty preferable to a War? more safe, less expensive, and (as he believes) more certain.

True again; but what have we been doing these twenty Years? have we not been treating and treating, with *Plenipo's* and *Commissaries*, and now *Plenipo's* again? Have not these gentle Methods been too often used already; and have they not as often been found vain and ineffectual? Have we not, by these numberless Treaties, made ourselves as contemptible in the Eyes of our Allies, if we have any, as we formerly were dreaded by our *Enemies*? 'Tis entirely this Method of Treaty-making, which has so sensibly lessened our Esteem in the several Courts of *Europe*, insomuch, that we own ourselves not sure of one *Ally* to assist us, should a War become necessary.

Are

Are we still to go on in the same Road? Shall *Spain* say to us, so far may your Men of War go, but no farther?

Fye, fye; let us throw off this Lethargy, and convince the Court of *Spain*, that we are now in earnest. Let us leave our old Path of Treaty-making, and tread a new and more glorious one. Let our wise Minister for once affect Popularity (tho' he has often times declared himself averse to it) and join with the general Voice of the Nation; *a War, or No SEARCH*. Since this, and no other, can be a Means of retrieving our lost Character, and regaining our former Esteem in the Courts of foreign Princes.

One Treaty, I will allow, if well concluded, is less expensive than one War; but the Method of Treaty-making we have followed for these Eighteen or Twenty Years past, has cost us six times as much as a Naval War would have done. Our Charge of *Ambassadors, or Commissaries, or Plenipo's*, or I know not what, has drained the Nation of an infinite deal of Treasure, without gaining us the least Benefit or Satisfaction. Xβ

Then as to our expensive Squadrons and mock Expeditions, they have cost us full as much from Time to Time, and been as chargeable, as if they had really been employed in Action. Can the Oppressed always submit, for ever be silent? No; the *English* are not yet so degenerated. X

I am

I am not laying any thing to the Charge of those worthy Gentlemen who were employed to accommodate the Differences between Us and *Spain*: Far be it from me; I believe they did their utmost Endeavours to reconcile Matters, and bring about an Accommodation; but if such could not, with any Honour, be obtained from that proud Nation, they should feel the Weight of our Cannon Balls, the Virtue of which has formerly been owned, but is now entirely forgot, by them. We therefore should revive it.

Which must certainly gain us more than by suffering ourselves to be afresh lull'd asleep by their deceitful Negotiations. We have found, by long Experience, that nothing but *main Force* can keep the *Guard de Costa's* from continuing their Depredations: And all the Satisfaction we have hitherto received from them, amounts to nothing more than the Honour his *Catholick Majesty* has done this Nation, in making a *Spanish* Don of Mr. *Keene*, and promising us a small Sum of Money to pay our Merchants for the Injuries they have sustained; which, by the bye, is not Six Pence in the Pound for the numerous Expences we have been at in obtaining those two Favours.

The Terms of Treating may be fixed, and you may cease to Treat when you will. Aye, but the Misfortune is, when we drop Pen and Paper, as insufficient for our Purposes, we
make

make no Use of our warlike Instruments and Preparations ; they dwindle away in a few Months to peaceable Pen and Paper again : And then the Terror of that Nation ceases on the Deposit of our Arms.

A War will, probably, be our Master, at least, as to its Duration. So it must ; after Treaty-making is found insufficient, we have no other Method left. *We must conquer, or be conquered.* The first we are pretty sure on, but there is very little Likelihood of the latter, on the Coasts of *Spain*. We must have the Superiority at *Sea* : * But we are afraid *France* will join them, otherwise we would quickly go to work. This is a poor Excuse, and may always be one, to the End of the Chapter. On the contrary, at this Juncture, we have no Reason to fear it ; the *Cardinal* knowing his Infirmities, and that his Time is near at Hand, being willing to leave his Country in Peace, which is now well established, and in Fame and Reputation.

But, say they, an ambitious Minister may succeed him. This Excuse, also, will never fail them. However, I hope we may begin and end a War with *Spain* before the Death of the *Cardinal* ; or, should we not, a new Minister must first take some time to gain the Affections of the People at home, and

B establish

* This Paragraph is not in the *Popular Prejudices*, but is, nevertheless, an Argument of great Weight, with them, against a War.

13 establish himself well in that Post, before he can pretend to disturb his Neighbours, or intermeddle with foreign Affairs.

When we are once engaged in a War, God only knows when, or how, we shall get out. We may now justly controvert this Paragraph, and say, We have not only once, twice, nor thrice, engaged in negotiating
13 Treaties, but for several Years together, without any Benefit accruing to us therefrom, and God only knows how we shall get out, or when they will end. For ought we know, should our present pacifick *Negotiators* live a few Years longer, our Conventions and Treaties may swell into as many Volumes, as our mighty *Statutes* at large; and our Rights (of Consequence) become more doubtful and unsettled than at present; those numerous Treaties, only serving to puzzle and confound one another.

And as the making of every new Treaty has been constantly attended with great Expences to this Nation, such Treating and
x13 Negotiating from Time to Time, would cost the Nation infinitely more than a War could possibly do; as has been proved by the Increase of the National Debt, with several new Taxes, for these twenty Years past.

Is Reparation sweeter, after Millions of Money wasted, and many thousands of Lives lost, than when had with little Expence, and no Danger? I blush to hear such a shameful Question started. Can it, with any Justice,

be denied, that our Negotiating for these twenty Years past with *Spain*, has not cost us a great deal more than a War would have done? How then can any thing so barefaced be now started? Our Merchants have also, and must at this Day, run as great Risks, and be in full as much Danger, as if a War was actually carrying on between the two Crowns; nay, for ought I know, a much greater; for then they would have had fair Warning to avoid meeting *Spanish* Ships as much as possible, and consequently arm themselves with proper Weapons for their Defence, in case of an Attack; but, by our treating with *Spain*, they are, in some measure, blindfolded, and may innocently betray themselves into Danger, wrongly imagining, that, by this Convention, a Cessation of Hostilities had been agreed upon during our Negotiation; when, alas! the insisting upon this very material and necessary Article, has entirely slipp'd the Memory of Mr. *Keene* at *Madrid*. Tho' one might wonder it should; for, by the second separate Article in the Convention, it is expressed, " That the said
 " under-written Ministers Plenipotentiaries
 " declare, by these Presents, that the Third
 " Article of the Convention, signed this
 " Day, does not extend, nor shall be construed to extend, to any Ships or Effects
 " that may have been taken or seized since
 " the 10th Day of *December* 1737, or may
 " be hereafter taken or seized; in which
 B 2 " Cases,

X B

“ Cases, Justice shall be done according to
 “ the Treaties, as if the aforesaid Conven-
 “ tion had not been made ; it being, how-
 “ ever, understood, that this relates only to
 “ the Indemnification and Satisfaction to be
 “ made for the Effects seized, or Prizes ta-
 “ ken ; but that the Decision of the Cases,
 “ which may happen, in order to remove
 “ all Pretext for Dispute, is to be referred to
 “ the Plenipotentiaries, to be determined by
 “ them according to the Treaties.”

One would wonder, I say, how our Pleni-
 po's consented to such Conditions ; by which,
 full Power is given to the Court of *Spain* to
 continue their Depredations, without any
 manner of Restraint. Would it not have
 been much more to the Advantage of our
 Nation, and Honour of our Plenipo's, if
 those Lines had run thus: *That this Conven-*
tion shall not be construed to extend to any Ships
or Effects that may have been taken or seized
since the 10th of December 1737: But that
such Ships as can be lawfully proved to have
been unjustly seized and confiscated from the
10th of December 1737, to the 1st of March
1738-9, shall be made good to the Owners with-
out Delay, upon proving their Demands to the
Satisfaction of the Plenipotentiaries at Madrid.
And be it further declared, that notwithstanding
such Ships may have been condemned and
confiscated by the Spanish Governors in America,
that such Condemnation shall not at all be re-
garded ; that his Catholick Majesty entirely
disavows

disavows any such Proceedings, and is determined to abide by an impartial Decision of the Plenipotentiaries hereafter named between the two Crowns, after a full and clear Examination upon Oath of the Parties on both Sides; and that such Claims shall be paid in Six Weeks, by the Confiscators of such Ship or Ships, after such Conviction, without any Deduction whatsoever; and likewise, all reasonable Expences the Owners may be at, in proving their Demands. And be it further declared, That from and after the 1st of March 1738-9, if any English Ship or Ships be found, upon Examination before the Plenipotentiaries, to be unjustly detained or confiscated, that the Aiders and Abettors of such Captures, shall not only be obliged immediately to pay the full Value of the Ship and Cargo to the Owners, with the necessary Charges they had been at in proving the same; but should also be fined double the Value of such Ship and its Effects, to be paid to his Catholick Majesty, and also suffer twelve Months Imprisonment, besides such Fine.

Had this Article run in these express Terms, we might have believed his Catholick Majesty to be in Earnest; but, as they now run, few People are of that Opinion. And, indeed, which way can it be otherwise construed, when these Piratical Practices of the *Guard de Costa's* are so far from being restrained; that it is stipulated in the second separate Article to the Convention, That "all Ships
" which have been, and may be hereafter,
" seized,

“ seized, from *December* 1737, shall be referred to the Plenipotentiaries, to be determined by them.”

I do not, in the least, dispute their Candor and Impartiality, having already, in some measure, experienced them both. But the Contest arises, by their not having procured a strict Order from the Court of *Spain*, to his Governors in *America* and *New Spain*, &c. to cease their Depredations, with a severe Penalty upon such who dare disobey his Orders. Because then there would have been no Room for our Merchants to expect, or fear, any Injustice from them; whereas now they remain in a continual Dread.

I am the rather willing to believe that these natural Demands slipp'd the Memory of our Plenipo's (who undoubtedly have nothing more at their Heart, than the Honour and Welfare of their Nation) than that the omitting such necessary and salutary Demands proceeded from any selfish Views.

There was, indeed, an Article in a foreign Post the other Day, that his *Catholick* Majesty had sent strict Orders to all his Governors in *America*, to conform to the Convention signed between his Court and that of *Great Britain*, under Pain of his highest Displeasure, and that Copies were sent them for that Purpose: But it is a great *Query* whether this News is not entirely false: Or, suppose it true, as there is no Cessation of Hostilities declared on the Part of *Spain*, nor they

they expressly forbid them by their Sovereign, they are still at their full Liberty to exercise their Depredations and Cruelties, without breaking the Convention; and it is but paying a Trifle Twenty Years hence, if such Captures are proved, without any farther Trouble or Restraint. Besides, since they are likely to be called to an Account for their former Conduct, they may now alter their Measures, and when any Ship is hereafter taken and confiscated by them, may sacrifice the Lives of the Captain and Crew, to prevent any future Discovery.

I hope it won't be denied, but that every Ship so taken, lies entirely at their Mercy, and how far they may hereafter extend it, no Man can tell; perhaps the Seizure of the one, may also be the sure Condemnation of the other; there is nothing like going through stitch; if they cut us off, we tell no Tales.

Reimbursements for the mighty Charges of a War, are never to be expected.

No, nor Reimbursements for the mighty Charges of a Peace, be it ever so short or trifling: But a War would oblige that haughty Power to grant us far better Terms, than ever we shall be able to get from them by soliciting Cap in Hand: For they have so often seen our harmless Fleets of late Years, that they are now only too apt to deride and despise them. Perhaps they think Action is banished the Kingdom, and we are metamorphosed into little less than Marble Statues.

Statues. 'Tis therefore now high Time for us to open our Eyes, and shew ourselves Men, who are capable of Resentment, and have a Heart to resent.

It rarely happens that such private Losses are ever made good, especially where there are many Doubts and Perplexities about them, and when Losses and Claims are urged on the other Side. This is our Case; we shall receive One fourth of our Losses, by the Doubts and Perplexities raised by the Court of Spain, and the Claims urged by them. Altho' such Claims are so far from being clear, that the Merchants, and the whole Nation, are kept ignorant of them. If the Sum of 95,000 *l.* is acknowledged by the King of Spain, to be due to us on Ballance, ought we not to be informed what Claims are brought against us, which could reduce our Demands to that Sum? * " Our Demands upon Spain are stated in an Account signed June 14, 1738, by Mr. Stert, one of the Commissaries, at 343,277 *l. Sterling*. And, in the same Account, the Demands of the King of Spain are said to amount to 180,000 *l. Sterling*: Whence the Ballance due to Great Britain, is there allowed to be 163,277 *l. Sterling*. Now, for what Reason 68,277 *l.* is again deducted out of this Sum, and the Ballance thereby reduced to 95,000 *l.* especially after 180000 *l.* the full Demands of Spain; had been previously

* See Observations on the Convention, p. 38, &c.

“ viously admitted, is an Enquiry that has
 “ hitherto been constantly eluded, tho’ the
 “ Honour of the Transactors, and the In-
 “ terest of the Publick, in this particular
 “ Article, seem to require, on this Head,
 “ the clearest and most explicit Representa-
 “ tion.”

But we are so far from being let into the Reason for our last Deduction of 68,277 *l.* that we are not even to be acquainted with the Particulars of the first Claim of 180,000 *l.* tho’ all Arts possible has been tried to find it out. Some People, indeed, have interpreted, that this last Deduction of 68,277 *l.* is allowed for destroying their Fleet, near *Sicily*, in the Year 1718: But, as this is not warranted by Authority, we ought to have no Regard to it. Let us drop Surmises, and wait with an eager Expectation of having the Nature of both these Deductions fairly laid open to us; when, I doubt not, but it will appear to our entire Satisfaction, that, as the great Man has often declared, *He bated Expedients, and those who made use of them*, no more Deductions, nor Concessions, have been allowed to *Spain*, than were consistent with Justice, and the Honour of our Nation. But to go on: *’Tis better that Particulars should suffer, than a War be undertaken.* I hope he does not mean our particular Limits, or Rights of Traffick; in the *American* Seas. If we cannot quietly and peaceably enjoy our Rights and Properties there, without being
 C invaded

invaded in them ; or cannot, by fair Means, procure an exprefs Acknowledgment of them, with Security for the Time to come, a War, even if it were almost unsuccessful, would be much more to the Advantage and Honour of the Nation.

When Retribution can be procured for such private Losses. By the way, 95,000 *l.* only, will hardly bear the Name of a Retribution. *And a Stop put to them for the Time to come.* I deny that ; this Stop should have been inserted in the Convention, by way of a Cessation of Hostilities ; then we might have had some Reason to hope for an effectual Stop by-and-by : But now we must rely entirely upon the Strength of our Plenipo's ; perhaps they may obtain it, and perhaps not.

The Compensation obtained from Spain, a Compensation seldom obtained from any Nation, is despised and ridiculed. A mighty Compensation, indeed ! We prove our Demands to the Amount of 343,277 *l. Sterling*, and after fitting out mighty Squadrons, at a vast Expence to the Nation, we admit two large Demands of the King of *Spain* to be deducted from the above Sum (the Particulars of which, we are entirely ignorant of) to the Amount of 248,277 *l.* which reduces the Whole of our Demand to 95,000 *l.* only : And even that Sum, it seems, his *Catholick Majesty* has protested, he will not condescend to grant ; no, nor even this Convention itself, insufficient to us as it is, 'till the *South Sea*

Sea Company pay the 68,000 *l.* which they have acknowledged to be due to him; altho' the King of *Spain*, at the same Time, acknowledged, that he owes them upwards of 300,000 *l.* This is according to the *Spanish* Proverb, *You shall first pay me the small Demand I have upon you, and then your whole Demand shall be paid you afterwards.* Notwithstanding these flagrant Proofs, a certain great Man has often times made no Scruple to declare, that, *by this Convention, we shall reap all the Advantages which could have been expected from a War, had it been ever so successful: That it was impossible to change any one Stipulation in it, into a Shape more advantageous to ourselves; and that it so fully answered all the Declarations of Parliament, and the reasonable Expectations of the Publick, that the most virulent Malecontent would never be able to form a single Exception against it.*

As to Malecontents, I know no such Persons; or, at least, hold no Conversation with them. I declare myself a Lover of my King and Country, whose Interests are, and ought to be, inseparable: But, at the same time, cannot help saying, that the Great Man's present Opinion differs widely from that of the Generality of Mankind. What the Reason may be, I am at a Loss to guess, without it is because he is in the Secret, and we are out. The Advantages we are to reap from this Convention, is at present a Mystery to us all.

But I have already shewn the Possibility of making the second seperate Article much more advantageous to the Nation in general, by changing a Stipulation into another Shape, which I have done in Form in Page 12.

And which, no doubt, the Plenipotentiaries (who have *longer Heads* than mine) were more capable of forming. I therefore admire it was not done — That so material and necessary a Point should be totally disregarded by them — I rather chuse to say disregarded, because, when I reflect upon the ~~the~~ Strength of our Naval Force, that we had three formidable Squadrons at Sea, in their proper Stations; one in the *West Indies*, to correct the *Guard de Costa's*, another in the *Mediterranean*, and a third *at home*, to prevent any Invasion which might be formed in favour of the *Spaniards*, to divert us from executing our Designs upon them. I say, when I reflect how formidable we then were! I can't otherwise imagine, but that the Omission of such an *important* Stipulation, must rather be attributed to the Forgetfulness of our Plenipo's, than any other Reason whatsoever; since the Court of *Spain* was not, at that Time, in a Condition to defend herself from our Attacks upon their Provinces, should such have been thought necessary; neither, indeed, could they, with the least Colour of Justice, have denied us such Demand. For which Reasons, 'till I am otherwise convinced, I must believe, that no such

Demand

Demand has been made on our Part: And, if not, *whether this Convention has fully answered all the Declarations of Parliament, and the reasonable Expectations of the Publick, let the World determine.*

And the great popular Weight and Cry is thrown on Points not yet settled. This is a mistaken Notion, or rather an Evasion of the Point. The popular Weight and Cry, as he is pleased to term it, is against those Stipulations in the Convention, that expressly forbids our adding to the Fortifications of *Carolina*, and consequently *Georgia* (which are both in a very defenceless Condition) but that every thing there shall remain in *statu quo* 'till the Regulation of our Limits can be decided by the Plenipotentiaries. If they remain in their present Situation, and the Plenipo's should not hereafter be able to agree in fixing those Limits, not only *Carolina*, but his Majesty's favourite Colony also, might soon become an easy Prey to the *Spaniards*. A second popular Cry is in our accepting 95,000 *l.* in Ballance for the whole of our Losses, by giving 248,277 *l.* to *Spain*, when, at the same time, we are kept ignorant how we became so much their Debtors. A third popular Cry was occasioned by their admitting two Ships, mentioned in the second separate Article, to the Determination of Plenipotentiaries.

The first was called the *Success*, which was acknowledged to be taken on the 14th of
April

April 1738, as she was coming out from the Island of *Antigua* (an hundred Leagues from any *Spanish* Settlement) by a *Spanish Guard de Costa*, and carried to *Porto Rico*.

Since this could not be proved to have carried on any illicit Trade, for God's Sake, why is it to be referred to Plenipotentiaries? The other was the Brigantine *Santa Theresa*, seized in the Port of *Dublin*, in *Ireland*, in the Year 1735. This was originally a *British* Vessel, but was taken at Sea by a *Spanish* Privateer, in as shameful a Manner, as the *Success* last mentioned. She was afterwards fitted out by the *Spaniards*, as a Merchant-Man, and trading in the Port of *Dublin*, was known by her own Masters, who seized her. Now, as Fortune had thrown this Ship again into the original Owners Possession, whose undoubted Right she was, could any one have imagined, that *Spain* would, in so barefaced a Manner, have demanded her again, or that our Plenipo's would have suffered it to be at all disputed. Besides, she was exempted in the third Article of the present Convention, had our Seizure been illegal. But neither that, nor the other Consideration, could prevail upon his Catholick Majesty, to desist from his Demand of referring the Decision thereof to the Plenipotentiaries.

The *Fourth* popular Cry is occasioned by the Omission of an Article, wherein, all Cessation of Hostilities should be agreed upon during the Time fixed, for a Decision of our particular

particular Rights and Limits in the *American* Seas, by the Plenipotentiaries. But, having treated largely on this Point in the foregoing Pages, I proceed now, to the *fifth* popular Cry, or Objection, which is against the King of *Spain's* Declaration, or Protest. This is a Paper of a very extraordinary Nature. That the *South Sea Company* shall first pay his Catholick Majesty, 68,000 l. in which Sum they own themselves indebted. And, at the same Time, his Catholick Majesty acknowledged himself indebted to that Company, in almost five times that Sum. Can this be reckon'd a just Way of Proceeding between Debtor and Creditor? Nay, what's still more surprizing, is, that our Plenipotentiaries agreed to this arbitrary Way of proceeding, "and having agreed
" with reciprocal Accord, that this Declara-
" tion should be made as the essential and
" precise Means to overcome the so much
" debated Disputes."

Certainly, if this very Protest had not been laid before the supreme Court of Judicature, and debated therein, the People of *England* must have been so far from believing it genuine, that it would have been all taken for mere Fiction, and, as such, totally disregarded. I am informed, that this Way of settling Accounts, is become so common in *Spain*, that they have made a Proverb of it, which I have already observed.

But

But, be that as it will, sure I am, that our Plenipo's never learnt that ingenious Art of *Arithmetick* in this Kingdom.

Since *Don Sebastian de la Quadra* has acknowledged, the King, his Master, indebted to the *South Sea Company*, upwards of 300,000 l. Our *English* Way of settling the Accounts between them, would be to deduct the 68,000 l. which the Company owe the King of *Spain*, from the 300,000 l. which his Catholick Majesty has acknowledged to be due to them, and then there would remain upon Ballance, 232,000 l. which ought, in a short Time, to be paid to the *South Sea Company*, as their just Dues and Demands.

I am sorry that we are in so bad a Condition, as not to be able to insist upon the waving this Protest. But, alas! on the contrary, we have admitted it, as the *only essential Means* we have left of settling the present miserable Condition of our Trade and Commerce in the *American* Seas, on more solid and lasting Foundations.

These are the grand Objections which the Merchants have started to this present Convention, and which the Author is pleased to term, a great popular *Weight and Cry*. He says, it would seem to me, that as he is the best General, who ends a War by Address only, and without fighting; so he is the best Politician, who prevents a War by an honourable Treaty. How Honourable this Preliminary to a Treaty

ty may be, I shall not dispute; but should be very willing to agree with him, provided we had been as famous in these twenty Years past, for our Wisdom in negotiating, as we have formerly been for our Arms. X

Nor does Spain now aim at universal Empire and Conquest. I think the contrary is evident. Does she not dispute our Right to *Carolina* and *Georgia*? Has not the *Spanish* Ambassador here delivered Memorials to that Effect? Did she not, a few Years ago, wrest *Naples* and *Sicily* out of the *Emperor's* Hands? And is she not now daily fitting out Fleets, to put her other Projects into Execution? Is she not so far from being contented with depriving his *Imperial* Majesty of his Dominions in *Sicily*, that she is now laying Claim to *Tuscany*, *Parma* and *Placentia*? What more Proofs can be desired, to shew that *Spain* now aims at universal Empire and Conquest? If all this is evident, which I believe no Man can contradict, are we not as much urged by Policy, as for the Honour of our Nation, to divert that Power by a War, from putting such Projects into Execution, which, if carried on with Success, must manifestly tend to our Prejudice. And what is worse, deprive us of our two favourite Colonies, which have already cost us Millions of Money to bring to Perfection. X
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If these *Spanish* Projects are near ripe for Execution, we shall never be able to get those Advantages which we proposed to our-

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selves

selves by this new Treaty. They will be still starting new Difficulties; and making such exorbitant Demands, as our Plenipotentiaries cannot, nor dare not, grant them. Thus may our Negotiation prove unsuccessful.

And, the Moment it is broke off, 'tis ten to one but a *Spanish* Fleet will be dispatch'd to seize upon those Colonies now in Dispute, which we have, by this Convention solemnly engaged not to fortify, but leave defenceless; I suppose, 'till *Spain* can prove her Right to them. By what has been said, 'tis plain we have more to fear from that Power, than from any other Power in *Europe*.

How cautious should we then be in our Negotiations? How careful not to suffer our minutest Rights to be in the least questioned or doubted? Since such Doubts would soon, with them, be term'd Rights; and, as such, become liable to be disputed: Which, when once brought upon the Carpet, might be extremely difficult for our Plenipo's ever to get *Spain* to recede from.

The Author says, *He could give an Instance at large of an English Commander, who having perfidiously, under Pretence of Commerce, invited two Spanish Gentlemen on Board, first kept them starving two Days, to extort a Ransom, and that failing, cut off the Ears and Nose of one of them, and, with a Cutlass at his Throat, forced him to eat them.* What a positive Assertion is this! yet I am so far from believing

believing it (tho' the Author has declared this Cruelty to have been exercised within his Knowledge) that if he does not hereafter, particularly mention the Name of that *English* Commander, or those of the two *Spanish* Gentlemen so served, together with the *Reign* in which that Fact was committed, and the Place where; not only myself, but every impartial Reader, must judge, that this very Report, as well as several others which he has occasionally interspersed, was studied with no other View, than to depreciate our Merchants Claims on the *Spaniards*, and prejudice the *Parliament* against them.

He goes on in asserting, *that some of our Colonies are known to have been Hives of Smugglers, or illicit Traders; all Men know it; they themselves had not the Face to deny, nay, they gloried in it.* But, why does he not mention what Colonies these were, especially as he has not spared even the Governors themselves, whom he charges with sharing in the Plunder? By such obstinate Assertions as these, there is no great Difficulty to give a shrew'd Guess at their Author.

There was, indeed, a Colony in a former *Reign*, which was deeply concerned with those who committed frequent Depredations upon whatever Ships fell in their Way, whether *French, Dutch, Spanish, or, indeed, English*; none escaped them, but such as were an Overmatch for them. Divers Complaints were made at our Court, and our

Ships sent out in quest of them ; some were taken, tryed and condemned : thus Satisfaction was made to the Parties injured. At length, his Majesty issued forth his most gracious Pardon to all those who would return from their Pyracies to their Allegiance ; when, to the great Surprize of the then Ministers of State, some of the principle Inhabitants acknowledged themselves guilty, by pleading that General Pardon ; and, among the rest, if I mistake not, the ingenious Author of this excellent Pamphlet, which is now under my Consideration, and who has since returned to *England*, and is, at this Time, under a Post in the Government.

However, he can't bring an Instance of any other Colony, that has trespassed in the like Manner. Nor, in short, is the aforesaid Assertion of any Weight at all. For the Depredations our Merchants complain of, has been committed by *Spanish Guard de Costas*, who held their Commissions from the King of *Spain* himself, or his Governors, and thereupon the *Spanish* Court became answerable for all such Transactions. Whereas, the Depredations committed on our Side, were by a few avow'd Pyrates, for whose Transactions, no Nation can, or ought, to be accountable. Suppose the Governor of that Plantation, and some of the Inhabitants, were in League with those Pyrates ; no just Demand could have been made upon our Nation

Nation for the Losses which the injured Parties might sustain. Because, such Violences were committed without his Majesty's Privy, or Consent, and without any Commission or Authority from him to search or molest them.

The Insufficiency of that Assertion plainly demonstrates the Spleen of the Author, who would leave no Stone unturned to deprive the Merchants of the Benefit intended them by Parliament, by throwing the blackest Calumny upon the most useful Body of Men in this Kingdom, and, in the Preservation of whom, the Riches and Welfare of this mighty Nation can only subsist.

He artfully goes on in declaring, *that he himself had seen as free Subjects as any that the King of Spain had, exposed to Sale, in a British Colony, purchased there like Cattle, and treated afterwards very little better by the Purchasers.* But why does he not mention that Colony, and in whose Reign it was? By his thus treating upon Generals, and not descending to Particulars, even such Things as he declares within his own Knowledge, we must be the less apt to believe him.

Speaking of the *English*, he says, *they will not go to War in Support of Smugglers and Thieves, sworn Enemies to the fair Trader.* This is, to say no worse, a bold Expression, and what his Patron himself dared not to utter in a certain Place. What! are a Company of injured *West-India* Merchants, who, for

for several Years past have been immense Sufferers, thro' the Avarice, Tyranny and Cruelty of the Spaniards, to be termed a pack of Smugglers, and Thieves at last, and who, as such, merited the Tortures and Imprisonments, which several have undergone?

Then howl, ye Inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the Merchant People are cut down: all they that bear Silver are cut off. Zeph. i. 11.—

And they shall make a Spoil of thy Riches, and make a Prey of thy Merchandize; and they shall break down thy Walls, and destroy thy pleasant Houses; and they shall lay thy Stones, and thy Timber, and thy Dust, in the midst of the Water. Ezek. xxvi. 12.—In the Time when thou shalt be broken by the Seas in the Depths of the Waters, thy Merchandize, and all thy Company in thee shall fall. All the Inhabitants of the Isles shall be astonished at thee; and their Kings shall be sore afraid; they shall be troubled in their Countenance. The Merchants among the People shall hiss at thee; thou shalt be a Terror, and never shalt be any more. Ezek. xxvii. 34, 35, 36.—Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured; even thy Merchants from thy Youth, they shall wander every one to his Quarter; none shall save thee. Isa. xlvii. 15.

I have now, Sir, gone thro' the several Arguments, which have been made by this Author, in Defence of the present Measures, and hope I have answered the same to your entire Satisfaction.

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This only remains to be said ; That it is a Sign of a very bad Cause, when a Ministry will take so much Pains, and be at so great an Expence, in printing some thousands of no less than *three* several Pamphlets at this Time, and dispersing them *gratis* in Town and Country, with their *stupid* GAZETTEERS. And, not content with that, but they, who of all Persons in the Kingdom, ought to have buried in everlasting Silence, the former ill Treatment which the *Spaniards* might have received from the Hands of the *English*, have been the first to enumerate them. Is not this a manifest Weakness in those whose sole Business it is to insist upon ample Satisfaction for the Injuries we have received ; and not to make an Outcry of what formerly we may have been guilty of ? This Stumbling-Block of theirs, in my humble Opinion, is a much greater than the most *virulent* Malecontent could have thrown in their way, to retard the present Negotiation with *Spain*.

I am, Sir, &c.

F I N I S.

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